Tamil Nadu

- School Education minister K A Sengottaiyan announced that all school students in the state will start their day with 15 minutes of physical exercise soon.
- The Minister announced the initiative while launching guides for spoken English training course, to be started soon in Government schools.
- The Minister urged the Chief Educational Officers in all the districts to take the idea forward and ensure its implementation.
- The initiative aims to ensure physical movement to relieve muscle soreness and improve joint flexibility to keep the students energetic and mentally alert and no rigorous exercise to be followed in its place.
- The school education department is also planning to impart chartered accountancy training to more than 500 students after the Class XII exam this year.

- Tamil Nadu Medical Council makes ‘mandatory’ for all medical students to register with the council to check ‘fake’ doctors.

Number Theory

- TN has 1.4 lakh doctors compared to 1.7 lakh doctors in Maharashtra.
- After removing those who have moved out or have stopped practice, MCI estimates 1.15 lakh doctors to be practising in the state.
- Tamil Nadu has one doctor for 709 people.
- There are 49 medical colleges in Tamil Nadu and nine in Puducherry. 8,580 students join the course every year.
✓ Student registration numbers will be automatically converted into doctors’ licence after the completion of the degree
✓ The move is aimed to check those registering themselves as doctors with fake MBBS certificates ‘secured’ from universities
✓ The council decided to introduce the new rule after it noticed that many were applying for doctors’ licences with fake medical degrees and certificates.
✓ Each year, 8,580 students join the MBBS course from the 49 medical colleges in Tamil Nadu and 9 colleges in Puducherry.
✓ The renewal of licence has to be done compulsorily once in every 5 years
✓ In order to continue practising, as a pre-requisite, doctors should have completed at least 30 hours of continuing medical education in the 5 years

➢ The Centre - cleared 3 new medical colleges in Tamil Nadu at Krishnagiri, Nagapattinam and Tiruvallur in addition to the 6 cleared last month.
✓ Each of these new medical colleges will have 150 MBBS seats
✓ The 6 colleges approved earlier would be set up at Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar, the Nilgiris, Dindigul, Namakkal and Tirupur.
✓ Every medical college and hospital will have at least 300 doctors apart from creating 9,000 jobs for doctors, nurses, paramedics and other allied health workers.
✓ The health department was also planning to take over Rajah Muthiah Medical College and Hospital in Chidambaram, similar to the acquisition of medical colleges of ESIC, and IRT medical college in Erode.

➢ Ashok Leyland - has announced that it has bagged an order from TN STU (Tamil Nadu State Transport Undertakings) for 1,750 buses
✓ This order comes close on the back of other orders received from various state transport undertakings recently
✓ Ashok Leyland, the flagship company of the Hinduja Group, is currently the fourth largest manufacturer of buses in the world and India’s largest bus manufacturer.

➢ The State government - has set apart ₹2,360 crore for the implementation of the Pongal gift scheme.
✓ Under the scheme, ₹1,000 will be given to each rice-drawing family cardholder, along with other groceries and raisins.
✓ As on October 30, there were 1,95,05,846 rice-drawing cards in the state’s PDS network.

STATES

➢ Southern Railway - has set up free Wi-Fi services at 544 railway stations in Tamil Nadu and Kerala as part of the Digital India initiative.
The nationwide programme of providing free Wi-Fi at over 5,000 stations was expedited in the 100-day programme of Railway Minister Piyush Goyal.

The free Wi-Fi was provided by the Government in association with Tata Trusts, Google and RailTel.

Southern Railway was among a few zones that had already achieved the target, thanks to the 4,900-km long optical fibre cable already in place.

The number of railway stations covered under the free Wi-Fi mission increased from 282 in March 2019 to 544 this year.

NATIONAL

Lok Sabha – passes a bill seeking to ban the production, import, advertisement and sale of e-cigarettes on November 27

The Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes (Production, Manufacture, Import, Export, Transport, Sale, Distribution, Storage and Advertisement) Bill, 2019 proposes to make the manufacturing, production, import, export, distribution, transport, sale, storage or advertisements of such alternative smoking devices a ‘cognisable’ offence, punishable with a jail term of up to 3 years and fine up to Rs 5 lakh.

According to the provisions of the bill, first-time violators will face a jail term of up to 1 year and a fine of Rs1 lakh and for subsequent offences, a jail term of up to 3 years or a fine of Rs 5 lakh, or both.

The storage of e-cigarettes shall also attract imprisonment of up to 6 months or a fine of up to Rs 50,000, or both.

The bill seeks to replace an ordinance issued on September 18.
The Lok Sabha - passed the Special Protection Group (Amendment) Bill, 2019 on November 27

- As per the bill, SPG security will henceforth be accorded only to the Prime Minister and members of his immediate family residing with him at his official residence.
- It will also provide protection to former Prime Ministers and their immediate family members staying with them at the residence allotted for a period of 5 years from the date on which they cease to hold office.
- The SPG (Amendment) Bill, 2019 was introduced in the Lok Sabha by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah on November 25, 2019.
- It seeks to amend the Special Protections Group Act, 1988.
- The SPG is the highest tier of security in the country
- It was set up in 1985 to protect the Prime Minister of India after the assassination of late PM Indira Gandhi by her bodyguards in October 1984.
- The SPG Act was further amended in 1991 to provide protection to former Prime Minister’s and their immediate families after the assassination of late PM Rajiv Gandhi in 1992.

The Lok Sabha - passed a Bill to merge the Union Territories, Daman and Diu & Dadra and Nagar Haveli on November 27

- The name of the new Union Territory which comes into existence will be Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.
- The Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill 2019 seeks to provide “better delivery of services to the citizens of both Union Territories by improving efficiency and reduction in paper work.”
- Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G.D. Kishan Reddy introduced the bill earlier in the lower house to merge the two union territories together
- There is only a distance of 35 km between the two islands, but both have a different budget.
- Daman and Diu have 2 districts while Dadra & Nagar Haveli has only one district.
The Bombay High Court will deal with the legal cases in the proposed UT as before.
The new UT will have 2 Lok Sabha seats after the merger.
Both the union territories were ruled by the Portuguese for a long time.
Daman & Diu was freed from Portuguese rule in December 1961.
It was part of Goa Union Territory till 1987, but then it became separate when Goa became a full state.
Dadara & Nagar Haveli became independent on August 2, 1954.
It later joined India in 1961.
Post merger, the number of union territories in the country will be reduced to 8, which includes Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, Puducherry, NCT of Delhi, Chandigarh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep
There are 28 States in the country at present, post the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir state into 2 Union territories by the Centre.

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) - will start a five year-integrated interdisciplinary programme to award an MSc degree in ayurveda biology, starting from July 2020
In a first-of-its-kind experiment in India, Professors of life sciences, molecular medicine and biotechnology will be the concurrent faculty at the School of Sanskrit and Indic Studies (SSIS) in JNU, New Delhi
The course will study traditional medicine and ayurvedic texts in the context of modern science.
The ayurveda biology programme will be jointly provided by SSIS, School of Life Sciences, School of Biotechnology and Special Centre for Molecular Medicine
The new programme will be supported by the Union ministry of ayurveda, yoga and naturopathy, unani, siddha, sowaarigpa and homoeopathy (Ayush).
The admission for this programme will be based on the entrance exam to be conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA)
Among other new plans, JNU will also be setting up the School of Indian Traditional Music and Dance from 2020 to conduct research in relevant disciplines
It also proposes to set up a start-up incubator infrastructure for enterprises to be started by students, alumni and faculty, at a budget of Rs 455 crore to host 100 new setups at any given time
The university has applied for funding from the Higher Education Funding Agency for this proposed set up.

The Joint Entrance Examination (JEE-Main) - will be offered in 11 regional languages, including Tamil, from January 2021.
The ministry of human resource development (MHRD) has directed the National Testing Agency (NTA) to prepare for conducting the test in at least 11 languages
which also includes Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Marathi, Odiya, Telugu and Urdu.

- JEE (Main) is the national level competitive test for admission to various undergraduate engineering and architecture courses mainly in National Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Information Technology and other government funded technical institutes (GFTIs)
- It is at present offered in English, Hindi and Gujarati.
- According to NTA, it has been offering the test in Gujarati following a request from Gujarat.
- This test also acts as the eligibility exam for JEE (Advanced), which is the admission test for the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).
- It was earlier conducted by CBSE and now the computer-based test is being conducted by NTA.

**SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- Indian space research organisation (Isro) – had successfully launched PSLVC47, that placed Earth observation satellite Cartosat-3 and 13 US nano satellites in their respective orbits, on November 27

![Image](https://example.com/image.jpg)

- The achievement marked a major milestone by Isro of launching more than 300 satellites from 33 countries in two decades.
- On November 27, around 17 minutes after the rocket lifted off from the second launch pad at Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, the launcher powered Cartosat-3 into a 509km polar sun-synchronous orbit with an inclination of 97.5 degrees.
- Within the next 10 minutes, 13 nano satellites belonging to two companies in the U.S were also placed in their respective orbits.
- These commercial satellites from US were launched under a commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Ltd. (NSIL), the commercial arm of the ISRO.
The launch was said to be unique, since the PSLV was navigated for the first time using the indigenous Vikram processor, designed by the ISRO and fabricated within the country.

The 1,625kg heavy, Cartosat-3 is the first in the third-generation Earth observation satellite with a high-resolution imaging capability.

It is the ninth in the Cartosat series.

One of the camera onboard the ‘sharpest eye in the sky’, Cartosat-3 satellite, is expected to capture images with a spatial resolution of less than 30cm, meaning it can see objects as small as 30cm from space.

The best ground resolution offered till now was 31 cm, which was provided by WorldView-3, a satellite owned by U.S. company Maxar.

Cartosat-1 had 2.5m resolution and the Cartosat-2 series had 1m resolution.

According to Isro, Cartosat-3 would assist large-scale urban planning, rural resource management and infrastructure development, besides providing information for coastal land use and land cover.

The satellite is also likely to have a military use since it provides the highest-ever spatial resolution of about a foot.

For Isro, this is the 47th successful PSLV flight since its first success on October 15, 1994.

On October 15, 1994, the vehicle in its second development flight, placed 804kg remote sensing satellite, IRS-P2 in orbit.

Till now, PSLV has placed 48 satellites, including Chandrayaan, Mars Orbiter Mission, apart from several micro, nano and experimental satellites.

It was the 5th launch of the year after GSLV-MkIII successfully launched Chandrayaan-2 on July 22.

Isro has so far placed 310 satellites from 33 countries since May 26, 1999.

On May 26, 1999, PSLV, on its second operational flight, carried 3 satellites in a single vehicle for the first time, which included satellites from Korea and Germany.

Isro has planned 13 missions in the next 4 months, which includes 6 launch vehicle missions and 7 satellite missions.

Cartosat-1, the first satellite of the Cartosat series, was launched on 05 May 2005.

Cartosat-2 was launched on 10 January 2007.

**ECONOMY**

- The Union Cabinet - approved the extension of the term of the 15th Finance Commission till October 30, 2020 and it is now expected to submit two reports.
- This means, effectively, the 15th Finance Commission will be asked to submit its recommendations for 6 financial years, instead of the regular tenure of 5 years.
- This is the second instance of the panel giving proposals for Centre and state finances for more than 5 years.
Earlier, the 9th Finance Commission headed by NKP Salve, had proposed a six-year timescale as the government had argued that it coincided with the five-year plan cycle
This time, the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and their conversion into union territories necessitated an extension in the panel’s tenure
Over the next few months before the Union Budget, the 15th Finance Commission will present its first report for 2020-21 to President Ram Nath Kovind
It will also present the 2nd edition of its final recommendations for financial years 2020-21 to 2025-26 by October 30, 2020.
The Union Government set up the 15th Finance Commission under the chairmanship of NK Singh on November 27, 2017
The 15th finance commission was set up to give its recommendations for five fiscal years beginning from April 1, 2020.

AWARDS

- NDTV - has won the International Press Institute (IPI) India Award for Excellence in Journalism, 2019, for the coverage of Kathua child rape and murder case and its aftermath, anchored by Nidhi Razdan

- NDTV was unanimously selected by a jury headed by former Attorney General of India Soli Sorabjee.
- Razdan has earlier won the Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism for reporting from Jammu and Kashmir and north-eastern India
- The Jammu and Kashmir State government has also awarded her for excellence in journalism.
- In 2017, she also authored a book titled Left, Right and Centre: The Idea of India.
- Since the India chapter of Vienna-based IPI awards was instituted in 2003, the first recipient of the award was ‘The Indian Express’ for its reporting of the Gujarat riots and its aftermath.
- NDTV has earlier won this award in 2004 for its expose of the baby-swapping racket in Hyderabad, and the corruption trail of the Telgi stamp scam.
- Namrata Ahuja of The Week won this award last year along with Ritu Sarin for their investigation prowess.
- IPI was founded in 1950 in New York by a group of editors from 15 countries and it now has members from around 120 countries.
SPORTS

- Odisha, the current home of Indian hockey –was announced as the host of 2023 FIH Men’s Hockey World Cup.

- The previous edition of the Hockey World Cup was held in Bhubaneswar in December 2018.
- Belgium were crowned as the champions in the last edition held in Odisha.
- The upcoming edition of the world cup will be hosted in two cities – Kalinga stadium in Bhubaneswar and Biju Patnaik Hockey Stadium in Rourkela.
- It would be the first time a country would be hosting successive editions of the premier tournament in the sport but the same city (Bhubaneswar) hosting it twice makes it even special.
- Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik made the announcement at a glittering event at the Kalinga stadium amidst 15,000 people in Bhubaneswar.
- The men’s hockey team had qualified for the Tokyo Olympics earlier this month.

RANKINGS

- India –continues to remain as the world’s top recipient of remittances, with its diaspora sending back $78.6 billion in 2018.
- India’s remittances were 14% of the global remittance figure of $689 billion.
- It was followed by China, with remittances of $67.41 billion (which is 5.4% of the global remittance figure).
- India was the top recipient of remittances, even in 2010 and 2015, for which data is available.
Remittances during 2010 were $53.48 billion, rising to $68.91 in 2015 — an increase of nearly 29%.

The rise in remittance between 2015 and 2018 is 14%.

As compared with the remittances in 2010, the latest figure of $78.61 billion shows an increase of nearly 47%.

These statistics were observed in the World Migration Report 2020, which was released on November 27, by International Organisation for Migration (IOM), which is United Nation’s migration unit.

Predominantly, high income countries always remain as the main source of remittances.

For decades, the US has consistently been at the top of remittance-sending country, with a total outflow of $68 billion

It was followed by UAE ($44.4 billion) and Saudi Arabia ($36.1 billion)

Indian community was the largest in the world during 2019 at 17.5 million people, with majority of Indians in UAE (3.4 million), US (2.7 million) and Saudi Arabia (2.4 million).

It was followed by Mexicans at 11.8 million and Chinese at 10.7 million.

For the very first time, China - has overtaken the US as the country with the most diplomatic missions across the world

India, the world’s second most populous country, remains at 12th place in the number of diplomatic missions set up globally

As per the recently released report from the Lowy Institute, China now has 276 diplomatic posts globally, 3 more than the US

While China has just one additional embassy/high commission than the US (169-168), Beijing has 96 consulates around the world to Washington’s 88.

India is ranked 12th in terms of such diplomatic posts, with 123 embassies and high commissions, 54 consulates, 5 permanent mission and 4 representations across the world.
France, Japan, and Russia are ranked at 3rd, 4th, and 5th positions.

Overall, Sydney-based Lowy Institute’s Global Diplomacy Index for 2019 ranked 61 countries of the world with 7,316 diplomatic posts in 724 cities, including 4846 embassies and high commissions.

Countries that ranked above India includes Turkey (6th place), Germany (7th), Brazil (8th), Spain (9th), Italy (10th) and UK (11th).

Rwanda, Somalia, Sierre Leone in Africa and Uruguay in South America are among the countries where India does not have an embassy, but China has set up the embassy.

Pakistan is ranked at 28th in the list with 85 embassies and 30 consulates across the world

In US, India has 5 consulates in New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Houston, and Atlanta (besides the embassy in Washington).